

# 4

Science  
Standard  
4.2.c.



## Dictionary

California Education and the Environment Initiative

**DRAFT**  
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# Life and Death With Decomposers



# Dictionary

**Name:**

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A

## **agriculture**

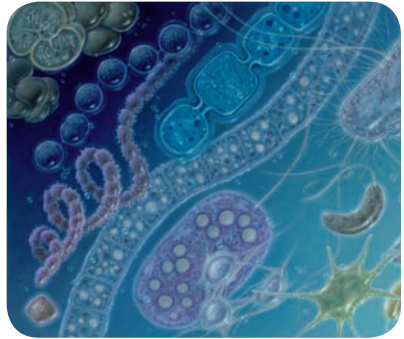
The practice of growing crops and raising animals for food, fiber, or other use by humans.



B

## **bacteria**

Microscopic, one-celled organisms that play a key role in decomposition.



C

## **compost**

A mix of decomposing plant and animal matter that is used to fertilize soil.





## decomposers

Bacteria, fungi, and mold that obtain energy and matter by breaking down the remains of dead organisms into their chemical and mineral components.



## decomposition

The breaking down of dead organisms into their chemical and mineral components.



## ecosystem

A specific area containing a characteristic set of interdependent species that interact with each other and the nonliving components found there.



# F

## **fungus**

An organism such as a mushroom that obtains energy and matter primarily from dead organic matter.



# H

## **humus**

The dark brown or black layer in soil that is made up of decaying plants and animal matter. Humus is rich in nutrients and helps hold water.



# L

## **landfill**

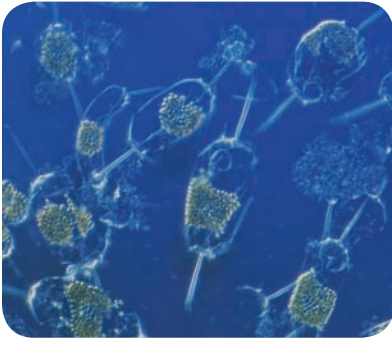
A place where solid waste, such as garbage and trash, is buried.





## **matter**

What all things are made of.



## **microorganism**

An organism such as a bacterium or fungus that is seen only with the aid of a microscope.



## **nutrient**

A substance that provides nourishment for growth and energy to a living thing.

S

### **scavenger**

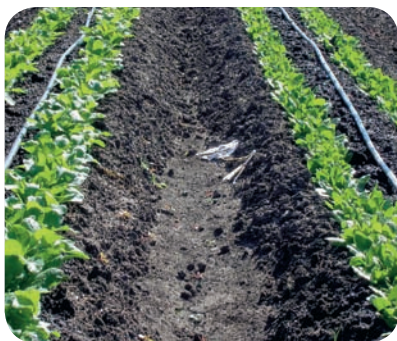
An organism that obtains energy and matter by eating dead organisms.



T

### **topsoil**

The upper layer of soil that contains organic matter that helps grow plants.



W

### **waste management**

The system of collecting, transporting, and processing waste created by humans.







## waste

In a living thing, the matter, such as undigested food, that is not used by the body and is discharged.

# Credits

## Dictionary and Word Wall Cards

### Illustration Credits

Bacteria	Jane Hurd/National Geographic Society
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### Photo Credits

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Unit Title: **Life and Death With Decomposers**

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